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Occupational Employment and Wages in Pittsburgh – May 2013

Workers in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$21.61 in May 2013, roughly 3 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.33, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Sheila Watkins, the Bureau's regional commissioner, noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were significantly lower than their respective national averages in 12 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical and life, physical, and social science. Four other groups had wages that were measurably higher than their respective national averages; among these were production and management. (See [table A](#) and box note at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2013

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment		Mean hourly wage		
	United States	Pittsburgh	United States	Pittsburgh	Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations	100.0	100.0	\$22.33	\$21.61	-3
Management	4.9	3.8*	53.15	54.95*	3
Business and financial operations	5.0	5.1	34.14	31.32*	-8
Computer and mathematical	2.8	2.8	39.43	33.92*	-14
Architecture and engineering	1.8	1.9	38.51	35.64*	-7
Life, physical, and social science	0.9	1.0	33.37	29.84*	-11
Community and social service	1.4	1.9*	21.50	18.77*	-13
Legal	0.8	0.8	47.89	49.70	4
Education, training, and library	6.3	5.8*	24.76	26.66	8
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media	1.3	1.1*	26.72	24.05*	-10
Healthcare practitioners and technical	5.8	6.7*	35.93	33.40*	-7
Healthcare support	3.0	3.4*	13.61	13.21*	-3
Protective service	2.5	2.1*	20.92	18.83*	-10
Food preparation and serving related	9.0	9.1	10.38	10.27	-1
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance	3.2	2.8*	12.51	12.53	0
Personal care and service	3.0	3.3	11.88	11.20*	-6
Sales and related	10.6	10.7	18.37	18.40	0
Office and administrative support	16.2	17.0*	16.78	16.19*	-4
Farming, fishing, and forestry	0.3	0.0*	11.70	13.61*	16
Construction and extraction	3.8	4.5*	21.94	22.45*	2
Installation, maintenance, and repair	3.9	4.0	21.35	20.74*	-3
Production	6.6	5.9*	16.79	18.10*	8
Transportation and material moving	6.8	6.1*	16.28	16.21	-0

* The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

Footnotes:

(1) A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in Pittsburgh is above the national mean wage, while a negative percent difference reflects a lower wage.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, Pittsburgh employment was more highly concentrated in 5 of the 22 occupational groups including healthcare practitioners and technical, office and administrative support, and construction and extraction. Conversely, eight groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation; these groups included management, production, and transportation and material moving.

One occupational group—construction and extraction—was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. Pittsburgh had 50,810 jobs in construction and extraction, accounting for 4.5 percent of local area employment, significantly above the 3.8-percent share nationally. The average hourly wage for this occupational group locally was \$22.45, which was significantly above the national average of \$21.46.

With employment of 8,800, construction laborers was the largest occupation within the construction and extraction group, followed by carpenters (7,790). Among the higher-paying jobs were first-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers (\$32.60) and plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters (\$27.16). At the lower end of the wage scale were construction laborers and electrician helpers, with mean hourly wages of \$17.20 and \$12.02, respectively. (Detailed occupational data for community and social service are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations available go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_38300.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area as it does nationally. In the Pittsburgh area, above-average concentrations of employment were found in several of the occupations within the construction and extraction group. For instance, construction and building inspectors were employed at nearly twice the national rate in Pittsburgh, as were highway maintenance workers. Carpet installers were employed at over three times the U.S. average. On the other hand, cement masons and concrete finishers had a location quotient of 1.1 in Pittsburgh, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

Note

OES wage and employment data for the 22 major occupational groups in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area were compared to their respective national averages based on statistical significance testing. Only those occupations with wages or employment shares above or below the national wage or share after testing for significance at the 90-percent confidence level meet the criteria.

NOTE: A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year for a 3-year period. May 2013 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected in May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, November 2011, May 2011, and November 2010. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 75.3 percent based on establishments and 71.6 percent based on employment. The sample in the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area included 6,187 establishments with a response rate of 75 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2013 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions

The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **Pittsburgh, Pa. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties in Pennsylvania.

Additional information

OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/2013/may/methods_statement.pdf. Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request – Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, Pittsburgh Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2013

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment ⁽²⁾		Mean wage	
	Level	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Construction and extraction occupations	50,810	1.2	\$22.45	\$46,690
First-line supervisors of construction trades and extraction workers	4,280	1.1	32.60	67,810
Boilermakers	(5)	(5)	25.69	53,440
Brickmasons and blockmasons	700	1.4	24.18	50,280
Carpenters	7,790	1.6	21.51	44,740
Carpet installers	650	3.1	22.41	46,600
Floor layers, except carpet, wood, and hard tiles	(5)	(5)	14.41	29,970
Tile and marble setters	(5)	(5)	20.78	43,220
Cement masons and concrete finishers	1,340	1.1	22.82	47,460
Construction laborers	8,800	1.3	17.20	35,770
Paving, surfacing, and tamping equipment operators	580	1.2	24.35	50,650
Pile-driver operators	40	1.3	26.10	54,290
Operating engineers and other construction equipment operators	4,860	1.7	22.50	46,810
Drywall and ceiling tile installers	280	0.4	22.34	46,460
Tapers	130	1.0	22.81	47,440
Electricians	4,150	0.9	24.73	51,430
Glaziers	420	1.1	22.04	45,840
Insulation workers, mechanical	90	0.4	30.82	64,110
Painters, construction and maintenance	1,330	0.8	21.84	45,430
Pipelayers	340	1.0	22.91	47,660
Plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	4,270	1.4	27.16	56,490
Plasterers and stucco masons	(5)	(5)	17.43	36,240
Reinforcing iron and rebar workers	50	0.4	26.31	54,720
Roofers	900	1.1	19.49	40,540
Sheet metal workers	730	0.6	26.20	54,490
Structural iron and steel workers	390	0.8	26.67	55,480
Helpers--brickmasons, blockmasons, stonemasons, and tile and marble setters	220	1.1	16.61	34,540
Helpers--carpenters	230	0.7	14.19	29,520
Helpers--electricians	360	0.7	12.02	25,010
Helpers--painters, paperhangers, plasterers, and stucco masons	(5)	(5)	12.45	25,900
Helpers--pipelayers, plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters	340	0.8	15.94	33,160
Construction and building inspectors	1,370	1.8	25.02	52,040
Elevator installers and repairers	(5)	(5)	28.45	59,180
Hazardous materials removal workers	410	1.2	21.77	45,290
Highway maintenance workers	2,150	1.8	18.26	37,980
Septic tank servicers and sewer pipe cleaners	180	0.9	20.85	43,370
Construction and related workers, all other	(5)	(5)	15.54	32,320
Derrick operators, oil and gas	100	0.5	20.31	42,240
Rotary drill operators, oil and gas	410	1.8	22.22	46,230
Service unit operators, oil, gas, and mining	250	0.5	22.92	47,660
Mine cutting and channeling machine operators	190	3.2	15.31	31,840
Roustabouts, oil and gas	550	0.9	18.12	37,680
Helpers--extraction workers	190	1.0	15.05	31,290
* This occupation has the same title, but not necessarily the same content, as the 2010 SOC occupation.				

Footnotes:

(1) For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the Pittsburgh MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_38300.htm

(2) Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

(3) The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the

occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

(4) Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

(5) Estimates not released.